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Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of progress made on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, in response to General Assembly resolution 67/209. Economic losses amount to hundreds of billions of dollars annually and are projected to double by 2030. Driven by investment decisions that do not take disaster risks into account, disaster losses are out of control, threatening the lives and livelihoods of billions of people and making sustainable growth and development an uncertain aspiration in many countries, now and in the future.

The fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in May 2013, brought together the largest and most diverse range of stakeholders to date, signalling the growing interest in and action on disaster risk reduction. The Platform provided substantive inputs into the development of a successor framework to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and called for governments to take a strong lead to ensure that disaster risk reduction is overtly recognized in the post-2015 development agenda.

Subject to a formal decision of the General Assembly, the Government of Japan has proposed that the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction be held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai city, Miyagi prefecture, Japan. Preparations are under way, including consultations on the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction to replace the Hyogo Framework for Action. Several core elements have emerged from the consultations, including: building on the existing framework and promotion of guiding principles; a bottom-up, people-centred framework with a focus on local action; governance, accountability

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and financing; and a mutually reinforcing framework with the post-2015 development agenda. Inclusive preparation for and participation in the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be key to ensuring that its outcome is owned and acted on by all stakeholders.

I. Trends in disasters and disaster risks

1. The cumulative impact of disasters represents significant lost opportunities for human development. Since 1992, when the international community first met to discuss sustainable development at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, more than 4.4 billion people have been affected in internationally reported disasters, a total of $2 trillion in damages, or an estimated 25 years of total overseas development aid, has been incurred, and over 1.3 million lives have been lost.

2. For the first time globally, annual economic losses from disasters exceeded $100 billion for three consecutive years and reached an estimated $157 billion for the reporting period. Risk of economic loss is growing as exposure of economic assets increases, outstripping reductions in vulnerability.[1] Damages associated with Hurricane Sandy in the United States of America, Canada and across the Caribbean exceeded $65 billion. Extensive flooding in parts of south-west and north-east China resulted in overall losses in excess of $8 billion. The lives lost as a result of Hurricane Sandy and the flooding in China were 210 and 151, respectively.[2]

3. The impacts on people's lives and health are considerable. Throughout the reporting period, over 15,302 people died, and 102 million were affected by some 302 internationally reported disasters.[3] The deadliest single disaster was Typhoon Bopha, which hit Mindanao in the Philippines in December 2012, leaving 1,900 people dead or missing and affecting 6.2 million people. Among the many countries that suffered from floods was Pakistan, where approximately 5 million people were affected. More than 18 million people suffered the effects of drought in the Sahel in 2012, including an estimated 7.7 million persons in Nigeria.

4. While large disasters receive the greatest visibility, it is extensive risk, characterized by low-severity, high-frequency disasters, that continues to represent one of the greatest challenges for development, particularly for low- and middle-income countries.[4] Economies with limited economic bases of investment and high average annual losses from disasters — such as small island developing States and the least developed countries — are less likely to be able to absorb recurrent disaster losses. In Jamaica, for example, average losses between 1991 and 2011 were equivalent to 2.6 per cent of the country's average annual investments. In Mozambique, disaster-related economic losses exceed 1 per cent of gross domestic product annually, with losses reaching 20 per cent following large-scale disasters, as seen in the floods of 200[illegible] and 2013. This loss in economic growth combined with disaster-related recovery spending continues to have a real and generational impact on development.

5. The impact of disasters on natural ecosystems is another area that receives too little attention. Wildland fires across Australia, Canada, the Russian Federation, the United States and parts of Africa and Asia contributed to the loss and erosion of natural ecosystems and resulted in serious consequences for communities,

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[1] United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), *2013 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: from Shared Risk to Shared Value: The Business Case Disaster Risk Reduction* (Geneva, Switzerland, 2013).

[2] Munchener Ruckversicherungs-Gesellschaft, Geo Risks Research, NatCatSERVICE, March 2013.

[3] EM-DAT: the OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database.

[4] UNISDR, *2009 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: Risk and Poverty in a Changing Climate* (Geneva, Switzerland, 2009).

businesses and the environment. The average internationally reported losses generated by wildland fires annually between 2002 and 2011 were estimated at a relatively low $2.4 billion.[3] However, that figure does not include the impact on ecosystem services, including carbon storage, support to biodiversity, protection of water sources, soil erosion and land degradation, and climate regulation.

6. Between 70 to 85 per cent of all new investment is generated from the private sector. Institutional investors currently manage assets worth more than $80 trillion globally, much of it with limited consideration to disaster risk.[1] In the years ahead, trillions of dollars will be invested in hazard-exposed regions. If those investments fail to take into account natural hazards and vulnerabilities — as they largely do now — risk will continue to accelerate.

7. Evidence-based decision-making remains critical to investment decisions that reduce risks. The number of national disaster databases is growing, and they now provide a more accurate picture of disaster losses and risks. Current evidence from databases suggests that total direct losses in 40 low- and middle-income countries was an estimated $305 billion between 1981 and 2011. Evidence from the *2013 Global Assessment Report* suggests that reporting of disaster losses has been conservative, with figures likely to be 50 per cent higher when smaller disasters are included. The increase in disaster losses warrants urgent action to address the underlying drivers of risk, and reliable and available data is needed.

II. Coordination and guidance on disaster risk reduction

A. Strengthening coordination at the global level

8. During the period under review, the secretariat of the International Strategy coordinated several initiatives, including consultations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction; convened the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction; coordinated the work of the United Nations system on the adoption of a United Nations Plan of Action; and developed several other areas of guidance.

Consultations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

9. My Special Representative for the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva officially launched the consultations in March 2012. The first phase involved 86 events, the results of which have been compiled in a Synthesis Report (available from http://www.unisdr.org/files/32535_hfasynthesisreportfinal.pdf) to inform the fourth session of the Global Platform.

Fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

10. The fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva from 21 to 23 May 2013, was chaired by the Government of Switzerland and brought together well over 3,000 participants. The fourth session was the largest and most diverse platform to date, with representation from 172 countries from: national and local governments; intergovernmental organizations; the International

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; non-governmental organizations; mayors and parliamentarians; representatives of local communities, indigenous peoples, children and youth, and persons with disabilities; and business, academia and the sciences.

11. The Global Platform built on the foundations laid by the regional platforms for disaster risk reduction that were convened in Africa, the Americas, the Asia-Pacific region, the Arab States and Europe as well as many consultative and preparatory meetings on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. Indeed, the fourth session of the Global Platform was a key milestone in the ongoing consultations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

12. Over 200 events and meetings were held, including: substantive dialogue with participants and stakeholders, and a high-level ministerial level dialogue; three main plenary sessions led by stakeholders and representatives of the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities, and government; a high-level event on disaster risk reduction for small island developing States in the context of preparations for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States; and featured events on disaster risk reduction business cases that applied science and technology, financing, health, women, children and youth, standard setting, urban planning, cultural heritage, drought and reconstruction.

13. The high-level dialogue at the Global Platform on the theme "Ahead of the wave: leading the way to resilience", co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and Ms. Tarja Halonen, former President of Finland, brought together 45 high-level representatives, including 34 ministers, chief executive officers and experts. The dialogue, through the agreed communiqué (available from http://www.preventionweb.net/files/33281_highlevelcommunique.pdf) called for: urgent action to address disaster risk in the post-2015 development agenda and the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change; the development of nationally agreed standards for hazard risk assessments; the start of a global safe schools and safe health structures campaign; the private sector to integrate disaster risk considerations into risk management practices; and, finally, the stimulation of collaboration on risk management among the public and private sectors at the local and national levels.

14. One focus of the Global Platform was on the economics of disaster risk reduction, presenting the business case and engaging with the private sector as both actor and partner. Over 150 business delegates attended. Chief executive officers and private sector delegates came together for their first annual general meeting on the theme "Private sector for disaster risk reduction" for the purpose of sharing business cases and practices as well as contributing to the global consultation on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

15. The Chair's summary (available from http://www.preventionweb.net/files/33306_finalchairssummaryoffourthsessionof.pdf) presents policy issues and guidance emanating from the sessions, events and meetings. It also highlighted the need to target the root causes of risk; connect mutually reinforcing agendas; assess risk; provide leadership at the local level; engage communities to achieve results; recognize the private sector as actor and required partner; strengthen integrated risk governance; and strengthen scientific and technical support for evidence-based decision-making.

16. The Strategy secretariat will work with partners and stakeholders to ensure the necessary follow-up to the Chair's summary as well as the high-level dialogue communiqué, including the development of possible targets and indicators for a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the global safe schools and safe health structures campaign in disaster-prone areas.

Coordinating the United Nations system

17. In my previous report to the General Assembly (A/67/335), I outlined the importance of disaster risk reduction in the United Nations system and called for coherent and coordinated engagement in supporting Member States to accelerate progress in disaster risk reduction. Led by the Strategy secretariat, and with the involvement of 29 United Nations system organizations, funds, programmes and specialized agencies, a United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (available from http://www.preventionweb.net/files/33703_actionplanweb14.06cs[1].pdf) was endorsed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its spring session, held on 6 April 2013 in Madrid.

18. The United Nations Plan of Action, in line with the vision of the Hyogo Framework for Action to substantially reduce disaster losses in all countries, sets out three commitments to support accelerated risk reduction and efforts to build resilience. Progress on implementation of the Plan of Action will be reviewed by a senior leadership group with the support of the Senior Management Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience of the High-level Committee on Programmes. The Plan of Action will be instrumental in implementing the guidance of the General Assembly on its quadrennial policy review of United Nations operational activities for development. The Plan of Action will be updated by the High-level Committee on Programmes after 2015 in the light of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

19. Other coordinated efforts of the United Nations system on disaster risk reduction include the Global Framework for Climate Services (available from http://www.gfcs-climate.org), which is being implemented by Governments with the support of the United Nations system and its partners to provide accurate and accessible climate services to users all over the world, with initial priority being given to issues related to food security, water management, disaster risk reduction and health.

International Day for Disaster Reduction

20. On the International Day for Disaster Reduction, which was observed on 13 October in 2012, the United Nations system highlighted the role of women and girls, the invisible force of resilience, and recognized and encouraged the leadership roles women have assumed in disaster risk reduction, as well as the movement beyond the tendency to view and portray women and girls only as victims.

21. The theme of the International Day for Disaster Reduction in 2013 will be on persons with disabilities (see concept paper entitled "A not so obvious conversation", available from http://www.unisdr.org/2013/iddr/documents/concept-2page.pdf). The intention is to switch on and amplify the theme in order to address the critical issue of the needs of persons with disabilities in potential disaster scenarios. The events surrounding the International Day will also provide an opportunity for persons with

disabilities to contribute to consultations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

Guiding and coordinating efforts with global partners

22. The *2013 Global Assessment Report* provides evidence of the need to increase engagement with the business community. Investors manage assets worth more than $80 trillion globally, yet asset managers rarely take disaster risk reduction into consideration when making investments. Where private investors choose to place funds in the future will largely determine how much disaster risk will build up and how underlying risk drivers will be addressed. There is increasing understanding of the relationship between investment decisions and disaster risk reduction. Companies are leading efforts to build awareness of and commitment to disaster risk reduction within the private sector through sector-generated research and outreach. A number of United Nations-supported initiatives, including the Strategy secretariat's publication entitled "Five essentials for business in disaster risk reduction" (available from http://www.preventionweb.net/files/33428_334285essentialscasestudies.pdf), are providing entry points for greater engagement with the private sector.

B. Strengthening coordination at the regional level

23. The Strategy secretariat continued to provide support to the development and implementation of regional strategies and action plans for disaster risk reduction across the world. Regional coordination, primarily through regional platforms, provided important opportunities for multi-stakeholders for countries and stakeholder groups to determine regional priorities and essential questions for considerations in the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

Africa

24. Africa is undergoing a period of rapid transformation in its economy, social structures and environment. Change, especially transformative change, brings both growth and vulnerability. Building communities that are resilient to disasters is the challenge facing Africa today. Leading the regional agenda for disaster risk reduction, the African Union Commission continues to demonstrate strong political commitment to implementing the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) and Programme of Action for its implementation. At the subregional level, five regional economic communities have defined policies and programmes on disaster risk reduction. Regional economic communities are working to ensure that disaster risk is on the agenda of every government in Africa, with 38 countries in Africa having established national platforms or coordination mechanisms. Disaster risk governance and normative development have witnessed significant progress this year with special focus on the current East African Legislative Assembly's bill on disaster risk reduction and management.

25. With commitments from national governments on the increase, several efforts have been made to capture disaster loss data to make investment in disaster risk reduction more objective through credible evidence. Six countries have developed disaster loss databases, while two additional databases are set to be launched in the coming months.

26. The fourth Africa regional platform for disaster risk reduction, held in Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania, from 13 to 15 February 2013, included the participation of more than 250 delegates from over 45 countries. In addition to governments and civil society, women, youth, local communities and the private sector were well represented. The regional platform reviewed achievements and challenges in implementing the Africa Regional Strategy and Programme of Action and identified measures for fulfilling shared commitments by 2015. Recommendations focused on strengthening capacity at the regional and subregional levels, increased political commitment and investments, better risk identification and early warning systems, promoting urban risk management and climate adaptation risk measures. At the institutional level, the focus this year has been on integrating climate change concerns into disaster risk reduction resulting in useful climate risk reporting.

27. It is planned to hold the fifth Africa regional platform in the second quarter of 2014.

Arab States

28. With the powerful political transformation occurring in many parts of the Arab region, the Arab States are committed to accelerating disaster risk reduction. The number of States in the region that have undertaken national assessments of progress and gaps in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action has increased. Countries are reporting more regularly on the Hyogo Framework for Action and are scrutinizing the challenges they face in integrating disaster risk reduction into national policies and programmes.

29. One area that remains a challenge is how to ensure that disaster risk reduction is linked into everyday planning decisions. For the most part, Arab States still struggle with mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development planning. There is a lack of clear national policy frameworks and legislation, which undermines coordination and hinders efforts to strengthen accountability in disaster risk reduction.

30. Despite those challenges, it is nonetheless evident that commitment to disaster risk reduction at the regional, national and local levels is increasing and strengthening. The first Arab Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Aqaba, Jordan, from 19 to 21 March 2013, was attended by more than 250 representatives from the Arab region. Participants of the Conference adopted the Aqaba Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Cities and developed a common position on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Aqaba Declaration, developed in collaboration with local governments, sets out a number of practical actions and targets to be achieved by 2017 to ensure that cities are more resilient to disasters. To ensure consistency with a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, the Declaration will be subject to a review process in 2015.

31. The next Arab regional platform for disaster risk reduction will be held in the second quarter of 2014.

Asia and the Pacific

32. Asia and the Pacific face the challenge of managing both the growing rate of exposure and rising vulnerability. Exposure to hazards has multiplied as urban

centres grow and people and economic activities expand into increasingly exposed and hazard-prone areas. In addition, smaller economies, those that have less diversified economic structures, and countries with high fiscal deficits, have greater vulnerability even when faced with relatively small-scale disasters. The growing economic losses owing to disasters in Asia and the Pacific have had an impact on development efforts, particularly for small farmers, microenterprises and poor households that bear the brunt of the costs of disasters.

33. In addressing those challenges, countries in Asia and the Pacific have placed strong emphasis on accelerating disaster risk reduction implementation using existing resources, while striving to close gaps in policies and legislation, capacities, information and financing. A strategic development in the region is the number of multi-stakeholder forums and civil society networks, which are expanding in scope with greater engagement. Regional coordination has been instrumental in raising the level of political commitments and in promoting action to address the disaster risk reduction challenges.

34. The fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from 22 to 25 October 2012, was attended by over 2,500 participants from 72 States and resulted in the adoption of the Yogyakarta declaration on disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific. For the first time, stakeholder commitments in the form of annexes to the declaration were included. The Pacific platform for disaster risk management, held in New Caledonia from 17 to 21 September 2012, committed to developing an integrated regional strategy for disaster risk management and climate change, to commence in 2016.

35. Thailand will host the sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangkok from 23 to 26 June 2014.

Europe

36. European countries are focusing on the establishment of legal and regulatory frameworks for disaster risk reduction. A number of countries have enacted new legislation to address disaster risk reduction, while others have amended existing legislation to reflect the changing risk landscape. Cooperation on addressing transboundary risk continues to advance, motivated by European Union legislation, through regional initiatives. The European Commission adopted the European Union strategy on adaptation to climate change to contribute to a more climate-resilient Europe through enhancing preparedness and capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change at the local, regional, national and European Union levels.

37. The European Commission adopted a Green Paper on insurance in the context of natural and man-made disasters. The Committee of the Regions, the voice of regions and cities in the European Union, adopted a resolution on future global approach to sustainable development indicating specifically disaster risk reduction as a key area to be addressed at the local level to achieve sustainable development. The resolution on the future global approach to ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future contains language on natural and man-made disasters, prevention activities and resilient cities. The Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities adopted resolution 339, which affirms its commitment to disaster risk reduction at the local level in line with the objectives of the making cities resilient campaign to raise the awareness of citizens and governments, use

local government budgets, and include disaster risk reduction in development and planning processes.

38. The third meeting of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from 1 to 3 October 2012. The regional meeting brought together experts from 27 European States, the European Commission and Council of Europe, the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe and the Strategy secretariat. The regional forum analysed the impact on European States of including risk reduction in climate change adaptation strategies and issued recommendations towards a systematic integration of a disaster risk reduction approach into such strategies. The forum facilitated exchanges among European countries in addressing resilience at the local level, resulting in strengthening the capacity of cities in risk assessment, climate change adaptation measures and early warning.

39. A regional consultation for Central Asia and the South Caucasus on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in March 2013. Some 60 representatives attended, assessing progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and identifying regional priorities, including risk assessments, resources, education campaigns, data collection and scientific evidence.

40. The next European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction will take place in Oslo from 23 to 25 September 2013.

The Americas

41. Urbanization across the Americas continues to pose many challenges in terms of the high concentration of public and private investments and assets in areas exposed to natural hazards, accelerated environmental degradation and weak governance. The combination of those factors, with the prevailing conditions of poverty and inequality in many parts of the Americas, has exacerbated the exposure and conditions of vulnerability to disasters of large parts of the population. In addressing the challenges, many countries in the Americas have committed to strengthening disaster risk reduction governance frameworks and developing new plans and strategies to further disaster risk reduction as a national priority.

42. Regional and subregional mechanisms are playing a critical role in advancing disaster risk reduction within development endeavours. The Organization of American States adopted the Inter-American Plan for Disaster Prevention and Response. In Central America, a consultative forum on the comprehensive management of disaster risk was established, and a corresponding fund was created. In the Caribbean, the Disaster Emergency Management Agency started a process to formulate a new comprehensive disaster management strategy, building on the existing one. In addition, the Association of Caribbean States incorporated disaster risk reduction as a key element of sustainable development into its new Plan of Action for 2013-2014, which was adopted in Petionville, Haiti.

43. The regional platform for disaster risk reduction in the Americas, which met in Santiago in November 2012, illustrated the commitment to working together to address disaster risk. The outcome of the regional platform, the Santiago communiqué, reaffirmed a path to economic development, social and environmental sustainability through bold and innovative approaches that allow for the

consolidation of achievements in the reduction of the underlying factors of risk. This included efforts to eradicate poverty and inequality and to promote access among nations and communities to information, knowledge, resources and opportunities. The regional platform also provided inputs into the consultations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Americas recognizes the need to achieve a higher level of political commitment towards the establishment of clear targets for disaster risk reduction that can be quantified and verified, as well as the mechanisms that enable the monitoring of follow-up actions.

44. The fourth session of the regional platform for disaster risk reduction in the Americas will be held in Ecuador from 27 to 29 May 2014.

C. Strengthening national level coordination

Progress on implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action

45. A review of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (available from http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/32916) found that since 2005: 191 countries have established focal points; 146 countries have participated in at least one cycle of the Hyogo Framework for Action review; 121 countries have enacted legislation to establish policy and legal frameworks; and 86 countries have set up formal national coordinating bodies for disaster risk reduction (national platforms).

46. There has been an increasing shift since 2005 from a crisis management approach to one of proactive risk reduction and building resilience in many countries. Governments are increasingly taking a multi-hazard approach to disaster risk reduction, translating and linking knowledge of the full range of hazards to all aspects of risk management. Decentralizing disaster risk reduction, giving more authority and responsibility to local communities, has improved although it has yet to make a significant impact on disaster reduction at the local level. Reducing the underlying risk factors of disasters remains the most challenging area. No country, since the beginning of the Hyogo Framework for Action monitor cycles in 2007, has reported comprehensive achievement across all indicators.

47. Progress is being constrained by the limited availability of human, technical and financial resources in countries at all income levels, which is hindering aspects of implementation ranging from early warning systems to education. Nearly all countries have reported difficulty in integrating climate change adaptation measures into national polices and in incorporating disaster risk reduction into environmental issues.

National platforms for disaster risk reduction

48. The 86 national platforms that have been established are now recognized as mechanisms that support the institutionalization of disaster risk reduction at the national level. National platforms provide space for stakeholders to advance disaster risk reduction. The role of the platforms was recognized at the fourth session of the global platform, where a call was made to hold a national platforms forum at the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.

49. At the same time, there are gaps in purpose, guidance, support and capacity of the national platforms. Throughout 2012/2013, the Strategy secretariat facilitated a review of the capacity of national platforms in disaster risk reduction, led by

Ecuador, Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, Senegal and Sweden and supported by a reference group of 20 other national platforms. The review highlights the relevance of the platforms in leading the coordination of national disaster risk reduction activities. They include reporting, consulting and determining joint cross-sector initiatives. The importance of a multi-stakeholder membership of national platforms has been underlined.

50. A further way to strengthen the platforms and national coordination for disaster risk reduction is through peer reviews. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland became the first country to undergo a voluntary peer review to assess its progress in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action. The review, conducted by a team comprised of members from Finland, Italy, Sweden, the European Commission, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Strategy secretariat, was found to be very useful. I encourage other countries to use a peer review to assess their national progress.

Integrating disaster risk reduction into United Nations country programmes

51. Efforts continued to strengthen United Nations support to countries in integrating disaster risk reduction into their development agendas through the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and the leadership of resident coordinators and United Nations country teams. In 2012, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cameroon, India, Jordan, the Republic of Moldova, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and Togo approved new Development Assistance Frameworks that incorporate disaster risk reduction considerations into development planning. The number of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks referencing disaster risk reduction in the Americas has increased from 3 to 10: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico and Peru. Since the formal approval by the United Nations of the operational guidelines for integrating disaster risk management into United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in 2009, 54 countries have drawn up such plans. Over half the plans have incorporated disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Further progress is expected in the light of the recently endorsed United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.

52. United Nations country teams have developed strategic action plans, reviewed country progress in recovery planning and refined strategic frameworks in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines and Viet Nam, along with a new regional United Nations Development Assistance Framework in the Pacific, which feature key disaster risk reduction elements. Stronger cooperation by the United Nations system had proved valuable in Djibouti, Lebanon and Mauritania in strengthening implementation of disaster risk reduction.

53. The General Assembly, through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, has requested further action on efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction at the country level and to provide guidance to Member States and United Nations organizations on building and strengthening disaster resilience at the local, national and regional levels in the context of development.

D. Strengthening local level coordination

54. The Strategy secretariat strongly advocates for disaster risk reduction to be centred at the local level and, in particular, to build cities that are disaster resilient and to promote local government action. Owing to the rapid rate of urbanization, cities remain central to the disaster risk reduction and resilience agenda.

55. As highlighted in the *2013 Global Assessment Report*, rapid urban growth in hazard-prone countries and in regions with weak capacities to manage disaster risk presents a significant threat to development achievements and future investments in development. The limited incentives in urban development to invest in reducing disaster risks, together with the short-term profitability of speculative urban development and the often weak or ineffective public regulatory frameworks, is a major barrier to building resilient and sustainable cities.

56. The World Disaster Reduction Campaign on the theme "Making cities resilient: my city is getting ready", which was launched in 2010, is supporting cities in building resilience across the world (see http://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities/). The Campaign now counts more than 1,400 local government signatories across more than 90 countries, who have pledged the use of the 10 essentials for making cities resilient, which serve as a guide for local governments to prioritize disaster risk reduction as a key determinant for sustainable urban development.

57. In 2012, the Campaign led the development and application of practical tools and resources to support the implementation of the 10 essentials. They include a handbook for local government leaders and the local Hyogo Framework for Action self-assessment tool, both of which are designed to empower local governments to take concrete actions to build their resilience to disasters. This year, the World Bank published *Building Urban Resilience: Principles, Tools and Practice* (available from http://www.gfdrr.org/sites/gfdrr.org/files/publication/Building_Urban_Resilience.pdf), a resource designed to give planners and practitioners a practical way to build elements of resilience into urban governance and planning. From 2013 onwards, the "Making cities resilient" Campaign, with more than 40 partners and participating cities, will continue to build local resilience while ensuring that local priorities are included in the future post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

III. Towards the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Building a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action

58. The post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction will build on the knowledge and practice developed through the implementation of the International Framework for Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction of 1989, the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation 1994, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction of 1999 and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.

59. The Mid-term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2011 (available from http://www.unisdr.org/files/18197_mtrwv.pdf) pointed to several areas that required more effort and attention, particularly in Priority 4 in reducing underlying

disaster risk factors. The document Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action: Summary of reports 2007-2013, released at the fourth session of the Global Platform (available from http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/32916), found that most progress has been qualitative, grounded in policies, legislation and planning that lay the foundation of quantitatively measurable achievements in the future. The Hyogo Framework for Action has been instrumental in highlighting the nature and impact of reducing risk — a crucial first stage. An example is the commitment of governments to the establishment of focal points and national platforms for the Hyogo Framework for Action, and the shift in mindset from crisis management to risk reduction and safety.

60. Several key messages in the consultations held to date on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction included the following:

(a) Build on the existing Hyogo Framework for Action and introduce the innovations necessary to address the challenges of increasing risk over the next 30 years; focus on addressing the drivers of risk and implementation through a pragmatic, strategic, dynamic and realistic plan for action and monitoring system; and reaffirm that local action is fundamental to reducing disaster risk;

(b) Design a clear set of principles and commitments; recognize that the reduction of disaster risk is a legal obligation, encompassing risk assessments, the establishment of early warning systems, and the right to access risk information; the progressive development and codification of international law carried on at present by the International Law Commission concerning the "protection of persons in the event of disasters" is highly relevant and welcome;

(c) Address the need to govern disaster risk reduction and resilience through strong coordination, enabled local action, and appropriate financial instruments; also, determine ways to address the transboundary nature of risk. Crucial elements include the full engagement of and incentives for the business sector, local communities and national authorities. An important principle is inclusiveness and participation — underpinning an "all of society" engagement;

(d) Enhance understanding of risk through evidence, assessments, education and public awareness; for example, the growing impact of extensive risk occurring with greater frequency and the effects of weather-related hazards on both built and exposed environments; demonstrate the effects of disasters on the national economy through analysis of loss and damages; empower communities through education and access to information; make use of advances in science and technology to communicate information on disaster risks to enhance community resilience;

(e) Leverage benefits of integrated approaches including providing guidance on integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in sustainable development. Generate information and ideas which will be beneficial to the post-2015 development agenda. Risk management to be mutually reinforcing, clearly addressed and incorporated into other global development processes.

61. The next step in the consultations on and development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction is to go even deeper into particular components. As highlighted by the Global Platform, more work is required on specific goals, targets and indicators. Specific stakeholders need to be consulted and partnerships developed to promote ownership of and commitment to the implementation, monitoring and review of systems in a new framework.

62. Of greatest importance is the need to draw on the practical experience and good practice of countries and organizations in the areas identified in the reviews and consultations to date, including: building resilience that targets those who are most vulnerable; integrating climate and disaster risk into sustainable development; grounding action at the local level; promoting women as a force in resilience-building and addressing gender equity in disaster risk reduction; designing incentives for the private sector to invest in resilience to risk disaster; fine-tuning risk assessments and using risk information in decision-making; strengthening disaster preparedness and early warning systems; ensuring that risk reduction is taken into consideration in post-disaster reconstruction as an important element of resilience-building; and mobilizing such sectors as health, education, agriculture, infrastructure and water management.

63. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/199, the Strategy secretariat will continue to ensure the continuation of extensive and inclusive multi-stakeholder consultations for a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The regional platforms will be a fundamental step in the process to develop the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and will consolidate the views, perspectives and contributions of all stakeholders. It is expected that attendance at the platforms will be at the senior political and executive levels. As such, the regional platforms will provide a very substantive and political contribution to the preparatory process of the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Preparation for the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

64. Subject to a decision of the General Assembly, the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will take place in Sendai city, Miyagi prefecture, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015. The Government of Switzerland has offered to sponsor and provide support to preparatory meetings in Geneva.

65. As decided by the Assembly, in its resolution 67/209, the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will review the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Hyogo Framework for Action has highlighted the strategic and practical importance of the regional frameworks and mechanisms for disaster risk reduction in order to strengthen cooperation and stimulate stakeholders' commitment as well as to periodically review progress on implementation.

66. Against this background, the General Assembly may wish to consider that the focus of the Conference should be:

(a) To review the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action;

(b) To consider the experience gained through the regional strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction and their recommendations as well as relevant regional agreements;

(c) To adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

(d) To identify modalities of cooperation based on stakeholders' commitments to implement a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

(e) To determine modalities to periodically review the implementation of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

67. The Assembly will deliberate on the modalities of the Conference and its preparatory process. Given the extensive multi-stakeholder engagement in the consultation process on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, there is an expectation that the preparatory processes for the Conference will be inclusive. In the context of the development of rules and procedures on accreditation, due consideration may be afforded to organizations which have already participated in past sessions of the global platforms for disaster risk reduction and the regional platforms and other forums for disaster risk reduction.

68. There is a strong expectation that the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will include a global forum of national platforms for disaster risk reduction, as well as the first children and youth forum for disaster risk reduction.

Post-2015 Development Agenda and Disaster Risk Reduction

69. There is now a better understanding that development cannot be sustainable if the disaster risk reduction approach is not fully integrated into development planning and investments, in both the public and private sectors. Every year, thousands of schools, hospitals and other critical infrastructure, including roads, transportation routes, electrical and power facilities and communications networks, are damaged or destroyed, thus severely affecting the economy and well-being of communities, cities and countries. Development investment that does not consider disaster risk will lead to the accumulation of more risk. As stated in the *2013 Global Assessment Report*, the world can expect losses from disasters to double by 2030 if development investments fail to account for, and address, disaster risk.

70. As discussions on a post-2015 development agenda, a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and a global agreement on climate change evolve, ensuring coherence and complementarity among the agendas is paramount. Anchoring disaster risk reduction within a new development framework, which is supported and elaborated through a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action, will be critical for sustainable development. The overall aim is to reduce the accumulation of risk and ensure that strong action is taken to address the underlying causes of risk that potentially undermine progress on all the agendas.

71. Following the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, disaster risk reduction and building resilience are now recognized and reflected in various ongoing work streams towards the post-2015 development agenda. I am encouraged that Member States and other stakeholders are now giving due attention to disaster risk reduction.

IV. Increasing investment for disaster risk reduction

72. There is a strong case to increase investments aimed at reducing risks and building resilience. Not only do those preventative measures save lives and reduce the cost of disaster relief and economic losses, but they also support longer-term sustainable development and the protection of investments and growth.

73. While few countries are able to quantify their investments in disaster risk reduction, according to the Global Assessment Report and the Hyogo Framework for Action progress reports, there is evidence that countries are now increasing their

budget allocations for disaster risk reduction. China, for example, aims to reduce direct economic losses from disasters to less than 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product by 2015.[1] This national target is supported by a comprehensive disaster prevention and reduction plan 2011-2015, a regular allocation from the central budget, special complementary funds at the subnational level, and major investments in flood, drought and agricultural disaster risk reduction.

74. One of the key outcomes of the Group of 20 Summit held in Los Cabos, Mexico, in June 2012 was a recommendation to Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to develop disaster risk reduction tools and strategies to help reduce the impact of disasters, protect populations and assets, and manage their financial and economic impacts. As a direct consequence, the Strategy secretariat collaborated with OECD and the World Bank to produce the Group of 20/OECD Methodological Framework on Disaster Risk Assessment and Risk Financing (available from http://www.oecd.org/gov/risk/G20disasterriskmanagement.pdf). The Framework helps finance ministries and other governmental authorities to develop more effective disaster risk management strategies and, in particular, financial strategies, building on strengthened risk assessment and risk financing.

75. In 2012, the Strategy secretariat and the European Commission's Directorate for Development and Cooperation launched a three-year initiative to support up to 40 countries in risk-proofing their public investments. The first year resulted in the creation of 13 to 15 disaster loss databases in three regions, 10 to 12 national risk assessments and generation of materials to mainstream disaster risk reduction into public investment, land use planning and climate change adaptation. Those tools provide decision makers with the information and evidence they need to make risk-informed investment decisions.

Funding of the Strategy secretariat

76. Disaster risk reduction and building of resilience is a growing area of work. Member States and other stakeholders understand and support the principle that it pays to invest in prevention, preparedness and plans to reduce disaster risks. At the same time, reducing risk is a complex and challenging task. There are many entry points and components.

77. The work of my Special Representative and the core work of the Strategy secretariat in the guardianship of the Hyogo Framework for Action; the consultations and development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction; the global, regional, national and local level guidance to stakeholders and partners, including the United Nations system; the *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*; and the "Making cities resilient" and other campaigns all facilitate the leadership, coordination, gathering of evidence and advocacy required to deliver on disaster risk reduction.

78. For the biennium 2012-2013, the Strategy secretariat set a resource target of $64.9 million to fulfil this work. In 2012, annual funds channelled to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction totalled $33.1 million. Contributions were received from a total of 26 donors. This signals donor confidence in the strategic direction of the secretariat and enhanced programme delivery, despite the increasing financial pressure on aid budgets in many donor countries.

79. The Strategy secretariat is broadening its donor base and securing increases in unearmarked funding from donors, where possible on a multi-year basis. This is critically important to ensure uninterrupted programme delivery given the expectations and demands placed on the Strategy secretariat. In 2012, multi-year funding agreements were negotiated and implemented with the Governments of Australia, Finland, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

80. The regular budget of the United Nations provides support for one senior position (D-1 level) in the Strategy secretariat. With a growing interest and priority in disaster risk reduction, the Strategy secretariat requires funding that is appropriately predictable and stable.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

81. Evidence suggests that over the past eight years, the exposure of people and assets to disasters has been rising. There is an increasing risk of losses in social progress, health, well-being, employment opportunities, security and economic development. The empowerment of communities and local governments to identify and manage their everyday risks is a sound basis for building strategies, programmes and budgets. Public institutions and business entities alike need to move towards a more comprehensive risk management approach.

82. To reduce existing disaster risk is not sufficient. Bolder and more focused action is necessary to pre-empt the further accumulation of risk. This requires a much closer look at the causes and drivers of risk, and in particular the development planning models and modalities for public and private investment. It is critical to increase the efforts to foster a public culture of prevention, where people have public and free access to simple, usable and clear risk information upon which to take action in the conduct of business — be it in the public or private sector.

83. In the forthcoming two years, focus must remain on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the pursuit of further concrete results in the areas of safety of schools, hospitals and other critical infrastructures, establishment of disaster loss databases, dissemination of information on risk assessment, raising of public awareness, sensitization of the business sector and the establishment of early warning mechanisms. The International Day for Disaster Reduction on 13 October 2013 will be an opportunity to engage with, and raise awareness of, persons living with disabilities in the context of disaster risk.

84. Further work will need to be done on gathering more data and specific national experiences on the elements for a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The leading work of the International Law Commission is a critical contribution to the definition of effective normative frameworks and the principles that guide and underpin the reduction of disaster risk. Work on improving national coordination mechanisms, including national platforms, will be important in realizing the Hyogo Framework for Action and any future framework for disaster risk reduction.

85. The Strategy secretariat will lead a work process with all stakeholders on targets and indicators for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, building on the experiences of countries and all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the Hyogo Framework for Action. This work will represent an

important contribution to the ongoing discussions on measurements for the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals.

86. The third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 is a much anticipated event. In the consultations on the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction, all stakeholders have demonstrated goodwill and the determination to collaborate and find creative and innovative solutions to address the common challenges ahead. The inclusivity of the consultative process is generating momentum, buy-in and commitment of all stakeholders. The World Conference will need to be as inclusive as possible. The regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, to take place in the first half of 2014, will provide stakeholders the opportunity to generate further engagement and momentum towards the World Conference and contribute policy insights and knowledge to the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

87. The third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will aim for Member States to adopt a post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction with the support of and commitments from all stakeholders and also make a contribution to the post-2015 development and climate change agendas.

88. The United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience will ensure that the United Nations system provides the necessary coherent support to countries for the further implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, and the preparation for the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

89. The aspirations and goals of sustainable development, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction must not be seen in isolation. Therefore, consideration must be given to disaster risk reduction and the building of resilience to disasters within the post-2015 development agenda in order to promote a complementary, mutually reinforcing and coherent approach between the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the post-2015 development agenda.

90. **In the light of the above, I recommend that:**

(a) **Member States continue the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and, in particular, that they collect data on losses and damages, strengthen the resilience of schools and hospitals, and ensure that any new critical infrastructure is disaster resilient;**

(b) **Member States and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and local communities, devote focused efforts to identify and address the causes of risk accumulation, in particular in the context of new investments, both public and private;**

(c) **The preparatory process for the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction build on the critical contributions of the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the regional platforms, be inclusive, and allow for the active engagement, buy-in and commitment of all stakeholders;**

(d) **Member States carry out national multi-stakeholder consultations to prepare for the upcoming regional platforms and the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and establish, strengthen or**

conduct peer reviews of, as appropriate, national platforms or similar mechanisms to facilitate consultations;

(e) Member States and relevant stakeholders participate in the upcoming regional platforms with senior-level delegations and with representation from institutions, local governments, the private sector, the sciences, and civil society in order to share views, expectations and recommendations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

(f) Member States address disaster risk reduction in the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals;

(g) Member States consider predictable resources and support for the further strengthening of the Strategy secretariat as it leads the consultations towards agreement on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and support the preparation and organization of the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, while continuing to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.